

to take on the "experts" and consider UFOs seriously even in the fairly recent past.

Finally the "laughter curtain" mentioned earlier has not only kept most sighters from reporting their sightings but has kept many newsmen and scientists from risking their professional reputations by sticking their necks out to request funds for investigation of UFOs. In the case of the scientists, I can personally testify that my managers at two different major manufacturing concerns requested that I not make any public statements about UFOs because they were afraid such statements might jeopardize existing and potential development contracts from the government. Two PhD scientists in responsible positions with large employers in the LA area reluctantly turned down invitations to testify at the Congressional hearings in July of 1968 because their employers told them to maintain a low visibility with regard to their UFO activities. If this smells like coercion or censorship — it is certainly not the first or the last time employers have put the lid on their employees about controversial subjects.

The strange part about all this is that almost everybody who believes in UFOs behaves as if they believe that nobody else but themselves believes in UFOs — despite the fact that all the Polls show that a majority of the people around, especially the younger ones, believe in the reality of UFOs with the percentage of believers increasing as the education level increased and the age decreased. This is why I think that a few of the right people speaking out can very quickly create a landslide of interest and support since all it takes is somebody to "tap" the interest and existing belief. Sometimes I see my own role as that of the boy in the tale of the Emperor's clothes pointing out that as everybody knows but is afraid to admit, the case against the UFO is bare of reason, and factual backing and cannot compare with the full dress suit of facts supporting UFO reality.

Incidentally, I know that most naysaying scientists and newsmen haven't studied the facts about UFOs because I ask my audiences how many have read each of the four most useful sources of information about UFOs including "Project Blue Book Special Report 14", "The UFO Evidence", "The Symposium on UFOs", and even the "Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects" (the Condon Report). Perhaps 2-3% have looked at the Condon report but almost invariably the percentage who have examined the others is less than 1%. One might say ignorance is bliss.

MYSTERY: Why was Condon so negative?
Was it a government-sponsored whitewash?

Condon's contribution to the University of Colorado study was certainly negative and his actions since the publication of the study even more so. For example, he published a vicious, mindless paper "UFOs I have Loved and Lost" after the completion of the report with no useful information about UFOs, though he had just spent \$539,000 of our money to study UFOs. He refused to participate in and tried very hard to prevent the holding of three sessions of papers on UFOs by PhD level scientists at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Boston in December 1969, sending a seven-page letter to the members of the board of trustees of the AAAS as well as to Spiro Agnew, etc. He became almost livid to the editors of technical magazines who had provided "straight" coverage of his UFO study.

I had several phone conversations and some correspondence with Condon. I do not believe he mouthed a government-sponsored whitewash. I do believe that he, like Donald Menzel, William Markowitz, Philip Klass,

and other anti-UFO persons, sincerely felt that he was rendering a service to society by protecting us against such foolish notions as UFOs. Unfortunately, I believe that this feeling was and is based upon fulfillment of his own psychological needs rather than upon any sensible scientific basis. Remember that Dr. Condon was just short of his 65th birthday at the time the study really got under way. He had been a prominent scientist for more than 30 years and had been president of such groups of his peers as the American Physical Society, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Association for Physics Teachers. He had been at the center of things for a long time without doing anything about UFOs. If they were real he would have to admit that he had ignored them for all that time. He is an old friend and fellow member of the National Academy of Sciences of Donald Menzel, Harvard Astronomer, who had long ago "shown" that UFOs were all explainable. Condon was not at all accustomed to being challenged by younger scientists such as Jim McDonald or myself. His own visions of his own greater importance would certainly be punctured if UFOs were not only real but their occupants had failed to come knocking at his door or that of the National Academy of Sciences. In phone conversations with me, he was far more emotional in his reactions to his critics than rational in response to the content of their criticism.

In short, it is my belief that Condon as one of the high priests of 20th century science was reacting in a similar fashion to the priests of the 16th-18th centuries who rejected Copernicus' notions about the sun replacing the earth in the middle of the universe. If the new notions are true, then the older priests are less important than they would like to believe. Menzel reacted in a similar fashion with baseless attacks on Jim McDonald at the previously mentioned AAAS Symposium. The proceedings of that symposium should be published in 1972 by Cornell University Press and should provide a fascinating contrast between the comments of those who have studied the data and those enamored of their own notions and importance without benefit of examination of the data. Jim McDonald's paper "Twenty-Two Years of Inadequate Investigation" is especially impressive.

Many newsmen who didn't bother to examine the data did seem to be taken in by the Condon report but as an indication that truth will out no matter how prominent the teller of untruths, it is worth noting the reaction to the Condon report by professional scientists and engineers. Drs. J. Allan Hynek and Jim McDonald, have reviewed it in detail and found it wanting in many specific respects. A UFO subcommittee set up by the prestigious American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) published its evaluation of the UFO problem and found, perhaps too generously, that it was a scientific study but that one could come to the opposite conclusions from Dr. Condon on the basis of the data in the report itself. The committee noted that careful study of the report reveals that 30% of the 117 cases studied in detail could not be identified. "The opposite conclusions could have been drawn from the content of the report, namely that a phenomenon with such a high ratio of unexplained cases (30%) should arouse sufficient scientific curiosity to continue its study." The committee is publishing other articles in the relative obscurity of the Aeronautics and Astronautics Journal, which I hope will receive more publicity than its conclusions. It is refreshing to note that the silent majority (80%) of the 2700 respondents to the Industrial Research UFO poll also did not believe Condon's conclusions were definitive.

Without belaboring the point that Condon's conclusions and the National Academy of Sciences review of them were totally inadequate, I would like to mention some sins of omission of the Condon report; sins not obvious to most readers of the study.